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ABSTRACT

This volume uses research to examine the symbolic processes in which teachers and students negotiate definitions of their roles, relationships, and knowledge in the context of educational tracking, particularly lower-track classrooms. The research on which the book is based includes interpretive accounts of curriculum differentiation and an explicitly cultural and curricular analysis using data from the school district of Maplehurst containing mostly white, average institutions where data were collected through participant-observer, interviews, and audiotapes of lessons. The study used a double comparison research design, which compared regular and lower track classes within each of two high schools and also across the two schools. The organization of the book reflects the conceptualization of curriculum differentiation as a scholastic, sociocultural, and political process of translation. Following Part 1, which contains an introduction in chapter 1, part 2 looks at the teacher's greater power to shape classroom life and how the teacher defines the lower-track student's role. Part 3 looks at defining the classroom climate in four chapters. Part 4 discusses defining curriculum for lower-track classes, focusing on how teachers and students interpret school knowledge. Part 5 concludes by suggesting ways of reconsidering curriculum differentiation. Contains 155 references. (JB)

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